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THE POSTMAN.

HARLIE STORIES.

HARLIE'S LETTER;

OR,

HOW TO LEARN WITH LITTLE TEACHING.

BY

JACOB ABBOTT.

WITH ENGRAVINGS,

FROM DESIGNS BY JOHN GILBERT.

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CHILDREN'S ROOM
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HARLIE STORIES.

I.—THE NEW SHOES.

COPY 1 II.—THE FRENCH FLOWER.

III.—HARLIE'S LETTER

IV.—WILD PEGGIE.

V.—THE SEA-SHORE.

VI.—FRISKIE, THE PONY.

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CHAPTER I.

HARLIE.

ONCE there was a little girl named Harlie. She lived with her mother, in a very lonely country, far away among hills and mountains. I call her a little girl because she was not grown up, but she was not so very little, after all, for she was more than nine years old, and she was pretty

tall and large for her age. She was, however, more advanced in wisdom and discretion, in comparison with her years, than she was in size. When you come to see a picture of her, farther on in the book, you will see that she was a very *pretty* girl. There was, moreover, a natural grace and gentleness in all her demeanor which was very charming.

Her grace, and beauty, and gentleness were of disadvantage

to her, however, in one respect, and that was, they made her mother unwilling that she should go to school. There *was* a school in that parish, but it was more than a mile and a half away, and the road which led to it was very wild and solitary. Harlie's mother was unwilling to have her go to school for two reasons. One was the fear that something might happen to her, going or returning. There had been stories, a

great many years before, of wolves in those woods, and though nothing had been seen or heard of them, for a long time, they might come back again suddenly, for aught Harlie's mother knew.

But the main reason why she was unwilling that Harlie should go to school was, that it would be so lonesome for *her* to remain at home by herself all day. There was one other person in the family, it is true, and that was Har-

lie's brother: his name was Josiah. He was pretty nearly grown up, and he was away all day at work in the fields. So if Harlie had gone to school, her mother would have been entirely alone almost all the time.

“Harlie is such a dear child,” she used to say, “that I can not bear to have her out of my sight.”

Besides all this, Harlie helped her mother very much about her work. She had a great desire to

learn how to do all the things that her mother had to do about the house. So she watched her mother when she was engaged in any particular household avocation, and observed exactly how the thing was done, so as to know how to do it herself.

In a very short time she learned how to make tea, and coffee, and to toast bread, and to set the table, and to do a number of other such things.

She took a great deal of pleasure in learning how to *iron*. She watched her mother when she sprinkled the clothes, so as to know just how much water to put on when she sprinkled them herself.

She often asked questions of her mother about the reasons for what she did, and her mother answered her questions as well as she could,—though she could not always answer them very well.

For instance, she one day asked her mother what was the reason why she sprinkled the clothes before she ironed them.

“Because they won’t iron smooth, unless we sprinkle them,” said her mother.

“Why not, mother?” asked Harlie. “Wouldn’t they iron smooth if the iron was very hot?”

“No,” said her mother; “but I do not know why.”

There is something very curious about this. Paper or cotton cloth that dries from a state of dampness in any shape, will remain in that shape afterward. You can try an experiment, if you please, to prove this.

Roll a piece of paper about any thing round, as a round ruler or a pencil, or the handle of a broom, and tie it with a string. Then dip it into water. Then put it in the sun to dry. After

it is dry untie the string, and you will find that the paper will not unroll, and you can slip it off from the round stick, and have a tube of paper, which will remain in that shape, or very nearly in that shape, because that was the shape that it dried in.

So when you iron a piece of cloth with a flat iron, the heat of the iron dries the damp cloth very quick, and the smoothness of the iron holds the surface of

the cloth smooth, while it is so drying, and so the smoothness remains.

It is not the *heat* of the flat iron that makes the cloth stay smooth after it is ironed, but the drying of it while it is smooth. All the good that the heat does is to make it dry quick. If you were to hold a cold flat iron in one place over a damp cloth, and keep it there, pressed down hard until the cloth was dry, then the

cloth would remain smooth. But you would have to hold it so for several hours if the iron was cold. But if it is hot, it dries the cloth immediately.

Harlie took great pains not only to learn how to sprinkle the clothes, so as to make them just damp enough, but also how to find out when the iron was hot enough. It had to be hot enough to dry the cloth as quick as possible, in passing over it,

and yet not hot enough to scorch it. Harlie learned how to find out when it was exactly right, by touching it quick with her wet finger, and observing how it hissed.

Harlie learned to fold the cloths, too, very nicely, and hang them on the horse in a smooth and careful manner.

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CHAPTER II.

JOANNA.

AFTER Harlie had learned to do a great many things about the house, she one day took it into her head to try to learn to read. Her mother, however, at first spoke very discouragingly in respect to this project.

“You could not learn to read here at home, child,” said she.

“Wait patiently, and some of these days you shall go to school.”

“But, mother, could not you teach me to read?” asked Harlie.

“I don’t know how to read myself,” said her mother. “I don’t know even the letters.”

“Did not you go to school when you were a little girl?” asked Harlie.

“No,” said her mother; “only to the Sunday School, and they did not teach me to read there.

They only taught me the catechism, and some psalms and hymns."

"And do you know any of the psalms and hymns now?" asked Harlie.

"Yes," said her mother; "I know the First Psalm: 'Blessed is the man who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly,'—"

And so she went on until she had repeated several verses of the First Psalm.

“Now, mother,” said Harlie, “if I only could find that psalm in the Bible, I could look on while you say it to me, and so I could learn to read it.”

“You *can* find it, easily enough,” said her mother; “for it is the very first psalm in the book.”

So Harlie went and got the Bible to look. But the difficulty was, she did not know how to find the Book of Psalms. After turning over the leaves of the

Bible for some time in vain, she put the book away again, saying she would ask Josiah, when he came home.

Josiah knew very little about reading himself. He, however, knew enough to find the beginning of the Book of Psalms, and Harlie put a mark in at the place.

The next day while her mother was at work by a window, mending some clothes, Harlie took her

seat near her, with the Bible in her lap, and opened to the place where she had put in a mark.

“Now, mother,” said she, “what is the first word?”

“Blessed,” said her mother.

“Yes,” said she; “this must be it. I am pretty sure this is it, for there are two crooked letters in the middle. Those are the *esses*. I know *esses* and *os*. Those are all the letters that I do know.”

So Harlie repeated the word, blessed, several times, looking at it attentively all the time. Then she asked her mother what the next word was.

“The next word is *is*,” said her mother. “Blessed *is*.”

“Yes,” said Harlie; “that is a very short word, and here it is, I am sure. The first letter has a dot over it, and the next letter is an *ess*. I shall know *is*, because it is such a short, little word. Besides,

it begins with a dotted letter, and ends with an *ess*. I mean to look along and see if I can not find another *is*.

So Harlie looked along the lines, and presently she found another *is* near the beginning of the next verse. Then she read *Blessed is*, two or three times, and finally asked her mother for the next word.

Her mother said the next word was *the*. Harlie examined the *the*

very attentively, and then read the three words, *Blessed is the*, two or three times. She was just beginning to think that she had read nearly enough for the first lesson, and was intending to stop as soon as her mother had taught her one word more, when, suddenly, the door opened, and a girl somewhat younger than Harlie came rushing in.

“Ah!” said Harlie, “here comes Joanna.”

Joanna said, as she came in, that her father had brought the pig, and was putting him in the pen, and Harlie's mother, whom Joanna called aunt, went out to see about it. Joanna then came to Harlie, and asked her what she was doing.

“I am trying to learn to read,” said Harlie, “but it is pretty hard, for my mother does not know how to read, and so she can't teach me very well.”

“*My* mother can read,” said Joanna.

“Then I think you had better ask her to teach you,” said Harlie.

“No,” said Joanna; “it is too hard for me. My mother can write, too.”

“Then you might learn to read and write, both,” said Harlie.

“No,” said Joanna; “they would both be too hard for me. But now come out and see the pig.”

So Harlie put away her book, and went out with her cousin, Joanna, to see the pig.

It was a very small pig, and he was very white and clean. Harlie's uncle Thomas had put him in his pen, and had covered the floor of the pen with straw, so as to make it look very nice. There was a small door in the back side of the pen, where the pig could go out, if he chose, into his yard. The yard was small,

but it was very pretty. There was green grass in the middle of it, and there were bushes in the corners, which made pleasant, shady places there, where the pig could lie down and rest when the sun was hot at noon.

“Now, Harlie,” said Thomas, when the pig was comfortably established, “you must feed him with milk for about a week, and after that you can begin to give him other things.”

CHAPTER III.

CHALKING.

WHAT very afternoon Harlie took her second lesson in reading. She brought the Bible to where her mother was at work, and there, as her mother repeated the words of the psalm, she found them one by one in the book. She began at the beginning again, at this second lesson, and read

over the three words which she had learned in the morning. She then went on to the three next words, and thus she learned six, and she looked attentively at them all, and observed the appearance that they made, until she knew them all, and could call them "by name," as she expressed it,—either forwards, or backwards, or any way.

It was very slow and difficult work at first, but Harlie perse-

vered. Two or three times, during the first few days, she was nearly discouraged. But she was determined not to give up.

Presently she began to find some of the same words in new places. The words *in* and *the*, she came to several times in the first verse, and having learned them once, she knew them very readily when she came to them again. This pleased her very much, and gave her fresh courage.

At length, after about a month, during which time Harlie had taken three or four short reading lessons every day, she got to the end of the psalm, and she could read it either backwards or forwards. She could even skip about at random, and tell any word that her eye chanced to fall upon. This proved that she could really *read* the words, and had not merely learned to repeat the psalm from memory.

She then found another psalm that her mother knew, and commenced upon that. She went along quite easily now, for she found she could read a great many of the words herself, without being told by her mother.

At length, one day she told her mother that she had a great mind to try to learn to write.

“You have not got any thing to learn with,” said her mother.

“You have not any paper, nor any pens, nor any ink.”

“Could not I learn with a piece of chalk and a board?” asked Harlie.

“Oh, no!” said her mother. “You might, perhaps, try with a slate, if you had a slate, and a pencil to mark on it with; but you could not learn with a piece of chalk. Besides, you have not got any body to teach you. There is nobody to set you copies.”

“I could copy the words out of the book,” said Harlie.

“That would not be right,” said her mother. “They are the printing letters that you see in the book, and you want to know how to make the writing letters.”

“But, perhaps, if I should make the printing letters,” said Harlie, “it would do me *some* good. Are you willing that I should try, mother?”

“Oh, yes,” replied her mother.

“I have not the least objection in the world against your trying.”

So Harlie determined to try. She procured a piece of chalk, and then found a place in the back-room, where there was a smooth door, which would not be harmed by making chalk marks upon it.

“Now,” said she, as she came to the door with her chalk in her hand, and with her Bible lying open upon a chest that stood

near, "the first thing is to see if I can make a Blessed. That is the beginning, and I am going to begin at the beginning."

So Harlie began to copy the several letters of the word Blessed, imitating, as well as she could, the printed forms of the letters, with her chalk upon the door. When she had got to the end, she stepped back a little way to take a survey of her work. The word was written in a very

crooked line, and some of the letters were all wrong.

Harlie surveyed it attentively for a moment, and then compared it with the book.

“It looks something like it,” said she; “and that is all that I could expect for the first time.”

Harlie’s mother was right in saying that the written forms of letters are different from the printed forms. But after all they are not *very* different. They are only

made in a more smooth and flowing manner, because it is more convenient to give them that form when making them with a pen. The printed letters have a good many short turns, and square corners, and sudden endings, which it would be troublesome to make in writing. Accordingly, in writing, all these angularities are softened off, and the letter is made more smooth and flowing. This you will see by comparing the

different forms of some of the principal letters.

PRINTED FORMS.

WRITTEN FORMS.

d ----- *d*

c ----- *c*

f ----- *f*

g ----- *g*

w ----- *w*

I suppose, therefore, that if a person were to learn to write altogether by copying the printed letters in a book, he would gradu-

ally fall into the habit of rounding his letters, and slanting them, and connecting them together by flowing strokes, to save the trouble of taking up his pen at the end of every letter, so that he would pass naturally to the writing forms of the letters, or something very much like that style ; though, of course, it would help him very much if he had a teacher to show him these writing forms at the beginning, and set copies for him to imitate.

Harlie went on for some weeks learning to write from the printed letters alone, and then all at once she received some aid and instruction in a very unexpected manner. How it happened will appear in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

PAKKIE.

MARLIE went on very patiently for some weeks, writing a little every day, and going on still all the time in learning to read. She found it rather tiresome to stand and chalk upon the door, especially as the chest where she had to lay the book was not very near. So her

mother let her have the ironing-board for all the days of the week except ironing-day, and this ironing-board Harlie contrived to place across two barrels, which stood one on each side of a window in the back-room. She then brought a chair and took her seat at the board as if it had been a table, and this arrangement she found very convenient, indeed.

Every day, after finishing her lesson, she would wipe off all the

chalk-marks with a damp cloth, so as to leave the ironing-board in a clean and nice condition.

All this time she went on with her reading, too. After learning to read all the psalms that her mother could repeat, she knew all the letters. She did not know the names of them exactly, but she knew the sounds, and this was much the most important thing; and by this means she could now begin to read in other

parts of the Bible, in passages which her mother had not learned. She used to sit by the side of her mother, while she was at her work, and read stories out of the Old Testament to her. When she came to a word that she could not read, sometimes her mother would help her determine what it was, by the sense, but sometimes she was obliged to pass it by altogether.

One day, while Harlie was

very busily engaged at her window, writing with her chalk on the ironing-board, she heard a sound outside, and on looking out through the window, which was open, she saw an elegant-looking gentleman on horseback coming toward her from the road. Behind him was a beautiful young lady, also on horseback. The gentleman said that he had lost his way, and he came to ask Harlie what road

he must go to get soonest to the castle.

Harlie laid down her chalk-pencil,—for she had cut her piece of chalk into the shape of a pencil, and had sharpened one end, so as to make it convenient to write with,—and then ran to the door, to tell the gentleman the way.

At the door she saw the pig. He was lying asleep there in the sun. As soon as he heard Harlie

coming, he started up and ran toward the door, thinking that she had come to give him something to eat.

“Run away, Piggy,” said Harlie; “I have not got any thing for you now.”

“Ah, ha!” said the gentleman, looking at the pig. “See here, Lady Mary. Look at this cunning little pachyderm. I suppose he is your pet,” he added, turning toward Harlie.

“My what?” asked Harlie.

“Your pet,” said the gentleman. “I mean, I suppose you are very fond of him.”

“Yes, sir,” said Harlie; “he knows me very well, and he always comes when I call him.”

“What is his name?” asked the gentleman.

“I have not got any name for him but Piggy,” said Harlie. “You call him pachyderm. What makes you call him that?”

“Because he *is* a pachyderm,” said the gentleman. “Pachyderm means tough-skin. All the animals of his class that have thick, tough skins and little hair, are called pachyderms. An elephant is a very big pachyderm. So is a rhinoceros. He has the toughest hide of all. Your pig is a little pachyderm. I don’t mean that his own skin is particularly thick and tough, for he is so young, and you keep him so

nice, that his skin looks quite delicate and tender,—at least, very tender for a pachyderm. Still, he belongs to that family.”

“I wish I had a prettier name for him than Piggy,” said Harlie; “but pachyderm is too long and hard.”

“Then you might shorten it,” said the gentleman: “you might call him PAKKIE.”

After talking in this manner a few minutes about the pig, the gentleman asked Harlie what she

was doing at the window, when he rode up to the house.

She said she was learning to write, and the gentleman and lady then rode up to the window to look at her work.

Harlie was at first afraid to have them see her board, for fear that they would laugh at the idea of trying to learn to write in such a way as that. But they were both too polite, and also too kind-hearted, to do any such

thing. They looked at the letters and words written on the board, and seemed very much interested in examining them, and they told Harlie that she was learning to write very fast, and very well.

After talking with Harlie for some time longer, and receiving from her the necessary directions for going to the castle, the gentleman and lady rode away, and Harlie thought that she should see them no more.

She was mistaken in this idea, however, for the next day the young lady appeared at Harlie's window again. She was on horse-back, as before, but the gentleman who came with her the day before was not with her now. In his stead there was a servant-man, in a sort of uniform called livery, who rode a little way behind her, and who had a parcel in his hand.

The servant dismounted from his horse, and then came and

held the young lady's horse until she dismounted. The young lady took the parcel and went into the house. Harlie's mother received her at the door, and invited her in. The young lady then told Harlie that she had brought her a writing-book, and pen and ink.

“You have done very well, indeed,” she said, “in learning at first with chalk and the board. It was the best thing that you could do. But now you have

got far enough along to write with pen and ink. We will go out to your window, and there I will show you how to use them."

So Harlie led the way, and the young lady followed to the back-room. There the young lady opened the parcel. It contained a writing-book, several quills, and an inkstand. The young lady placed the inkstand upon the table, and then taking out a pen-knife, she made all the quills into pens.

“Now,” said she, when the pens were made, “I will set you a copy once for all.”

So she turned to the inside of the cover of the writing-book, which was formed of pretty, white paper, and there set a copy of all the letters, in both the printed and the written forms. She put the printed letters in one column, and the written ones in another column, opposite each other; so that Harlie could at any time, by

looking on this paper, see what the proper shape was, in writing, for any letter.

“There!” said the young lady. “Now I will show you how to hold the pen, and how to dip up ink out of the inkstand; and you must go on writing whatever you please in your book, only before you write any word, you must look at this table and see how to write each letter. You will find that you can write much

faster and more easily, by making the letters in the writing form, than if you try to print them."

When she had explained these things to Harlie, the young lady, after wishing her success in her attempts to write with pen and ink, bade her good-by, and went away. She did not say any thing about her coming back, but Harlie had a strong hope that she should see her again some day.

CHAPTER V.

LETTER WRITTEN.

MARLIE found it a great deal more difficult to write with a pen upon paper, than with chalk upon a board. Still she persevered. She wrote diligently and carefully a little while twice every day. It was very hard at first, but it grew easier and easier all the time. After a while she

learned the written forms of all the letters so perfectly, that she had no occasion to look at the copies of them, set for her by the young lady on the inside page of her book; but whenever she wished to write any word which she saw printed in the Bible, she could make the written letters of it herself, from her own recollection of their forms.

In about a month after Harlie began writing in her writing-book,

when she was, in fact, drawing near to the end of it, the young lady came to see her again. The same servant was with her, and he had a parcel, too, as before. The parcel contained another writing-book, and some sheets of paper. There were also some more pens, and a small bottle of ink, although the ink in the inkstand was not yet nearly all used.

Besides all these things, there was also quite a big *printed* book,

with pictures in it, which the young lady brought to give to Harlie. It was a book of Fairy Tales, for Harlie to read to her mother while she was at work; for by this time she had learned to read very well.

The young lady opened the parcel, and gave all these things to Harlie. She also looked over the book which Harlie had written nearly full, and gave her some additional instructions and

explanations. Then she bade her good-by, and went away, without saying any thing about ever coming back again.

A few days after this, Harlie, on coming in from her writing-lesson, said to her mother:

“Mother, I verily believe I could write a letter.”

“Who could you write it to?” asked her mother.

“To my cousin, Joanna,” said Harlie.

“She could not read your letter,” said her mother, “if you were to write her one.”

“But aunt Joanna could read it to her,” said Harlie. “Aunt Joanna can read.”

“Yes ; perhaps she could,” said her mother, speaking, however, rather doubtingly. “But you could not send your letter, if you should write it,” she added.

“I could send it by the postman,” said Harlie. “The post-

man goes by aunt Joanna's house every day, and he could give her the letter."

"But he does not come by *this* house," said her mother; "and so you could not give the letter to him."

"I could give it to Farmer Ross," said Harlie, "when he comes here, and he could give it to the postman. The postman goes by Farmer Ross's house."

Farmer Ross was a neighbor

who lived about half a mile down the valley, and on the main road, where the postman went by every day. It was four or five miles to where Harlie's aunt and cousin lived; but she thought that, by giving the letter, when she had written it, to Farmer Ross, who often called at the house when he went by, he would give it to the postman, and the postman could carry it to her cousin.

“Well,” said her mother, “you

can try that plan, but I don't believe it will succeed. In the first place, I don't believe you can write the letter."

Harlie determined that at any rate she would try. So she worked several days in writing various things which she would like to say to Joanna, upon one of her sheets of paper. When the work was completed, she folded up the sheet, and wrote Joanna's name on the outside, and then the next

time when Farmer Ross came into the house, she asked him to carry it home with him, and give to the postman when he went by.

Farmer Ross took the letter very willingly, and said that he would give it to the postman the first time he came by.



FARMER ROSS.

CHAPTER VI.

LETTER RECEIVED

THE postman, as is usual with the postmen in that country, on mountainous and lonely roads, traveled on horseback. He carried his letters in a bag. This bag he carried before him on his horse. He also had a trumpet. Whenever he had a letter to leave at any particular house, he blew

his trumpet as soon as he found that he was coming near the house, and the people in the house, hearing the trumpet, would come out and be ready to take the letter when he arrived at the door. This saved him the trouble of dismounting from his horse, and also that of waiting at the door for the people to come, which he would have had to do if he had depended on calling them by knocking.

The day after Harlie gave her letter to Farmer Ross, Joanna was playing in the kitchen, at her mother's house. She had brought some broken bits of plates and saucers, and was arranging them in a row in a corner of the room, playing keep-house, when suddenly she heard the sound of a trumpet.

“Hark!” said she. “Mother, what is that?”

“That is the postman,” replied

her mother. He has got a letter for me. Run to the door and be ready to take it when he comes along."

So Joanna ran to the door, and waited on the step until the postman came.

"Is there any body living here by the name of Joanna," said the postman.

"Yes," said Joanna; "my mother and I."

There was nothing but the

word, Joanna, on the outside of the letter; for Harlie did not know very well what else she ought to put on. But Farmer Ross told the postman, when he gave him the letter, at what house it was to be left, and that was the way that he knew when to blow his horn.

So the postman gave the letter to Joanna, and rode on.*

* See Frontispiece.

Joanna carried it in and gave it to her mother.

“There’s nothing but Joanna on the back of it,” said her mother. “Who could have written a letter to me so?”

So saying, she opened the letter, and then exclaimed: “Why, it is for you! It is from cousin Harlie. Who would have thought of her being able to write such a nice letter. I wonder who could have taught her to write.”

“Read it to me, mother,” said Joanna.

So her mother began to read as follows :

“This is a letter that I am trying to write. It is for you, Joanna.

“Pakkie is very well. He is growing bigger. I told him the other day, that if he would not root up my flowers I would show him where he could get some

acorns. He kept his promise, and so I took him out into the field under the oak-trees, and let him eat a great many acorns. He likes them, I suppose, because they are pachyderms, like he is himself. I wish you would learn to write, and so write me an answer. This is from your cousin Harlie."

Harlie was mistaken in calling an acorn a pachyderm, as

that term is not applied to plants or fruits, however thick their skins may be, but only to animals.

After this Harlie went on improving very much in reading and writing. The young lady came often from the castle to see her, and brought her a great many different things at different times. She brought her several very entertaining books, and Harlie used to read the stories

in these books to her mother while she was at her work, in the long winter evenings, sewing, or mending. Her brother, Josiah, used to listen to the reading, too, and he liked the stories very much.

CHAPTER VII.

HARLIE'S PUPIL.

IT is a very noble thing for a child to have patience and perseverance enough to teach herself any thing useful, but it is a still more noble thing for her to have the kindness, and also the skill, to teach another person. Harlie did this, however. She not only taught herself to

read and write, but she also taught Joanna. And what is very curious, she began to teach her to write first, before she had learned how to read.

It happened thus: One day Joanna came to pay Harlie a visit. Farmer Ross brought her in his wagon. He left her in the road opposite the house where Harlie lived. When Joanna came up to the door, she found Harlie sitting on the step with a small

board in her lap, and on the board a paper, upon which she was drawing.

“Harlie!” said Joanna, “here I come. What are you doing?”

“I am making a picture,” said Harlie.

“What are you making a picture of?” asked Joanna.

“I am making a picture of Pakkie,” said Harlie. “It is almost finished. Pakkie is standing still out there under the

bushes, while I draw him. At least, he is standing as still as he can."

Joanna looked across the yard, and there she saw the pig standing under the bushes, and rooting among the roots of the grass. Harlie had made a drawing of him.

Joanna looked at the drawing and then at the pig, and she found that Harlie had drawn the outline very correctly.

“It is very easy to draw a pig when you have a pig before you to look at,” said she. “If I had a pencil and some paper, *I* could learn to draw.”

“I suppose you could,” said Harlie; “but it would be better for you to learn to write first. You might learn to write very easily.”

“Could I?” asked Joanna.

“No; I was mistaken,” replied Harlie. “You can not learn eas-

ily. It is quite hard to learn to write. Still you could do it if you had patience and perseverance enough."

"And if I had some body to set me the copies," added Joanna.

"*I* could set you the copies," replied Harlie.

"But then I have not got any paper and pencil," said Joanna.

"Ah! you must begin with chalk at first," said Harlie: "that's the way I did. I can give you

a chalk-pencil, and your mother will lend you the ironing-board to chalk upon, if you are careful to wipe out all your marks when you have finished your lesson."

Joanna said that she should like to learn to write very much, if Harlie would teach her. So Harlie, having finished her drawing, put that paper away, and then taking another paper, she wrote upon it with a pencil, in a very large hand, several words.

“I shall teach you first,” said Harlie, “the words that you will wish to use first in writing letters; because, as soon as you have learned to write words enough to make a letter, I shall wish you to write one to me.”

“But, Harlie,” said Joanna, “it will take a great many words to make a letter.”

“Oh, no,” said Harlie; “you might write a letter with only one word.”

“What word would that be?” asked Joanna.

“*Yes*,” said Harlie. “You might write a letter with only the word, *Yes*. For instance, if Farmer Ross was going to your house some day, I might write to ask you if the little birds in your robin’s nest were big enough to fly, and if they were you might write, *Yes*, and if they were not you might write, *No*. Either of these words would make a whole letter.”

“Then you must set me copies for *Yes* and *No*, the very first thing,” said Joanna.

So Harlie wrote upon her paper a very large *Yes*, and also a very large *No*, which Joanna was to copy upon the ironing-board, with the chalk, when she got home. Joanna also studied the words very attentively, so that she should know them, one from the other.

Harlie also wrote a number of

other words, most of which were names of such things as there would be occasion to write about in letters; and in order to save Joanna the trouble of studying their names at once, so as to know them, as she had done the *Yes* and the *No*, Harlie made a little picture of the thing after each name, so that Joanna should know the name by looking at the picture. The words she wrote were, *Hen, Chicken, Pig, Chair,*

Tree, Gate, House, and Barn,
making, with the *Yes* and *No*,
ten words in all.

When the words were written,
and the pictures all made, Harlie
folded up the paper, and laid it
aside, together with the chalk-
pencil, ready for Joanna to take
when she went home. Then they
went to play.

When the time came for Jo-
anna to go home, she took the
paper and the chalk and put

them in her pocket. Her mother was much pleased to find that she was going to learn to write, though she said she never heard of any body's learning to write before they had learned to read. She did not really think it was a possible thing. Besides, she did not believe Joanna would persevere.

In one thing she was right in her predictions, and in the other she was wrong. She was wrong

in believing that Joanna would not persevere ; for she did persevere. In the end she learned to write very well, and she and Harlie wrote a great many letters to each other.

Her mother was right, however, in thinking it not possible to learn to write before learning to read ; for by Harlie's mode of teaching, Joanna learned to write and to read both at the same time.





DATE TAKEN

May 8 '31

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Harlie's letter

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